RPTS DEAN

DCMN CRYSTAL

BUSINESS MEETING TO ADOPT THE OVERSIGHT PLAN

OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

FOR THE 113TH CONGRESS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2013

House of Representatives,

Committee on Energy and Commerce,

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 4:12 p.m., in Room 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Fred Upton [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Upton, Hall, Barton, Whitfield, Shimkus, Pitts, Terry, Rogers, Murphy, Burgess, Blackburn, Gingrey, Scalise, Latta, Harper, Lance, Cassidy, Guthrie, Olson, McKinley, Gardner, Pompeo, Kinzinger, Griffith, Bilirakis, Johnson, Long, Ellmers, Waxman, Pallone, Green, Doyle, Schakowsky, Matheson, Barrow, Matsui, Castor, Sarbanes, Welch, Lujan, and Tonko.

Staff Present: Nick Abraham, Legislative Clerk; Clay Alspach, Counsel, Health; Gary Andres, Staff Director; Charlotte Baker, Press Secretary; Mike Bloomquist, General Counsel; Matt Bravo, Professional Staff Member; Allison Busbee, Policy Coordinator, Energy & Power; Karen Christian, Chief Counsel, Oversight; Patrick Currier, Counsel, Energy & Power; Tom Hassenboehler, Chief Counsel, Energy & Power; Peter Kielty, Deputy General Counsel; Heidi King, Chief Economist; Ben Lieberman, Counsel, Energy & Power; Alexa Marrero, Deputy Staff Director; Gib Mullan, Chief Counsel, CMT; Mary Neumayr, Senior Energy Counsel; Katie Novaria, Legislative Clerk; Andrew Powaleny, Deputy Press Secretary; Chris Sarley, Policy Coordinator, Environment & Economy; Charlotte Savercool, Executive Assistant, Legislative Clerk; Peter Spencer, Professional Staff Member, Oversight; Jeff Baran, Minority Senior Counsel; Phil Barnett, Minority Staff Director; Jen Berenholz, Minority Chief Clerk; Stacia Cardille, Minority Deputy Chief Counsel; Alison Cassady, Minority Senior Professional Staff Member; Alli Corr, Minority Policy Analyst; Greg Dotson, Minority Staff Director, Energy and Environment; Kristina Friedman, Minority EPA Detailee; Caitlin Haberman, Minority Policy Analyst; Karen Lightfoot, Minority Communications Director and Senior Policy Advisor; Roger Sherman, Minority Chief Counsel; and Alexandria Teitz, Minority Senior Counsel, Environment and Energy.

The Chairman. The committee will come to order. At the conclusion of our meeting last Wednesday, the House voted on Mr. Pallone's amendment, and we began consideration of Mr. Waxman's amendment to the Oversight Plan.

[The Oversight Plan follows:]

******** INSERT 1-1 ********

The Chairman. And at that point the title was read, the amendment was read. And the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes, of which that will start now. Gentleman from California.

[The amendment of Mr. Waxman follows:]

******** INSERT 1-2 ********

Mr. Waxman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

According to the world's premier scientist and technical institutions, we have a rapidly closing window to reduce our carbon pollution before the catastrophic impacts of climate change are irreversible. My amendment simply asked that the committee should hear from the experts on their latest findings about the dangers of delaying meaningful actions to address climate change.

The World Bank recently released a report that paints a horrifying picture of what the world will look like if we continue along our current path. Within just 50 years, summer temperatures could increase by up to 11 degrees Fahrenheit in the U.S. The oceans could be 150 percent more acidic, levels unparalleled in Earth's history, which could cause the coral reefs to dissolve. Heat waves, drought, and intense floods would create, quote, "a number of extremely severe risks for vital human support systems," end quote.

Committee members should know about these findings. We should also know about the recent report by the International Energy Agency which concludes that if the world does not take action to reduce carbon pollution by 2017, just 4 years from now, then the energy infrastructure existing at that time will make it virtually impossible to limit warming to 2 degrees Celsius. This is a key threshold because many experts think climate change could spiral out of control above 2 degrees Celsius.

And we should learn about the report by PricewaterhouseCoopers on the costs of delay. Three years ago the world had to decarbonize

at a challenging but not unprecedented rate of 3.7 percent a year to limit warming to 2 percent Celsius. But because we did not act, we now need to decarbonize at the unprecedented rate of over 5 percent per year, which may not be achievable.

Over the past 2 years this committee has done absolutely nothing to address climate change. Republicans in the House voted to overturn EPA's scientific finding that climate change endangers health and the environment. They voted to block U.S. participation in international climate change negotiations, and they even voted to stop agencies from preparing for the effects of climate change. Neither Chairman Upton nor Chairman Whitfield responded to any of the 21 requests Representative Rush and I made for hearings with climate experts.

The amendments we will consider today offer this committee a stark and very simple choice in this new Congress: Are we finally going to take the warnings of climate catastrophe seriously or will we refuse to even hear about the latest science? That is what this is about.

The science of climate change wasn't always a partisan issue. In 1992, President George H.W. Bush signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which acknowledged the problem of climate change and set goals for addressing it. Since then, 20 years of research has vastly improved our scientific understanding and we have started experiencing the effects of climate change. In 2008, the Presidential candidates for both the Democratic and Republican Parties ran on policy solutions to climate change, but over the last 4 years the Republican Party has become the anti-science party. As Paul

Krugman wrote in the New York Times yesterday, "House Republicans have become the ignorance caucus." End quote.

Unless we can overturn the laws of physics, the recent extreme weather that has devastated so many communities will be the new normal. The seas will keep rising, the floods will grow more frequent and crops will wilt and our forests will burn. When our children and grandchildren struggle to prosper in this very different world and ask us why we allowed this to happen, what are we going to say? Are we going to tell them that when we still had a chance to act we looked away and refused to listen to the scientists raising the alarm? What could we possibly say to justify not only our failure to reduce carbon pollution, but our failure even to listen to the warnings and hear from the scientists?

For me this is a moral issue, it is a choice about how we treat others, our children, our grandchildren, and every other person who will live on this planet for centuries to come. We aren't asking for the committee to endorse any specific actions. We are simply asking for a commitment to listen to the scientists. We can't protect our children and our environment if we refuse even to listen. So I ask for support for this amendment.

The Chairman. The gentleman's time has expired. I recognize myself for 5 minutes, and just to respond this way. The purpose of this markup today is to vote on the Oversight Plan representing the many committee priorities that we have outlined, including oversight related to global climate change. The committee has included in this

document its plans to consider whether international agreements and regulatory efforts addressing climate change are scientifically well grounded. The committee has also included in this document its plans for the activities of Federal agencies and its jurisdiction relating to future weather events and natural disasters. And as we implement our agenda we will have many hearings and the minority will have the opportunity, as always, as has been proven, to offer witnesses who may help educate the members on these important issues.

We will call a hearing with EPA to examine the administration's second term climate actions, and we remain focused on job creation and growing our economy, and we look forward to working with all members on this. And with that I yield back.

Is there further discussion on the Waxman amendment? The gentlelady from California.

Ms. Matsui. I strongly support the Waxman amendment and I would like to commend Ranking Member Waxman for spearheading a bicameral climate task force. The Waxman amendment ensures that we take seriously the new reports that highlight the rapidly shrinking time frame that we have to meaningfully address climate change. The International Energy Agency predicted, by 2035, the global temperature would increase by 3.6 degrees Celsius, an increase that would have catastrophic consequences. However, in the same report, IEA also concluded that by taking actions to limit carbon emissions prior to 2017 we can reach the goal of limiting warming to 2 degrees Celsius.

The third U.N. environmental program emissions gap report also

recently found that limiting warming to 2 degrees Celsius may be insurmountable or very costly without immediate action. We cannot ignore these reports. Congress must take meaningful steps to combat and reverse the devastating effects of climate change, and that starts with this committee. Just last year, the U.S. recorded the hottest year on record. A severe drought swept through the Midwest, wildfires destroyed part of the West, and Superstorm Sandy ravaged the Northeast, all vivid reminders that climate change is real and not just a scientific theory discussed in reports.

At the Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing last week, we heard testimony that climate risk must be taken into consideration when formulating our energy policies. Failure to do so will result in further economic and environmental catastrophes. Fortunately, right now there are thousands of small clean energy technology businesses developing innovative products and techniques that will help us combat climate change, while at the same time creating jobs and spurring economic growth. Now is the time to invest in these clean technology companies to ensure that we remain a global leader in clean energy and to prove we are serious about protecting and strengthening our environment, our economy and our national security.

I strongly support the Waxman amendment and look forward to future hearings on climate change. And I yield back.

Mr. Waxman. Gentlelady yield to me?

Ms. Matsui. I will yield to the ranking member.

Mr. Waxman. I thank you for yielding your time back. The

chairman said that the committee will hold hearings. And what those hearings would do is to ensure that international agreements and EPA rules are scientifically well grounded. That is the statement in the action report before us. But the hearings we have had, and even these hearings, have been about policies, whether we are for or against EPA's actions. What I am asking for in this amendment is for scientific experts to come in and tell us about the underlying problem that has led to the different proposals by EPA or others in the government, scientific experts, so we can understand the problem, and then we can evaluate the actions that are being proposed in light of the problem that we are trying to deal with.

I don't consider the chairman's comments a commitment to seriously examine the impacts of climate change and the range of potential policy responses. And I would only point out that when we had what was described at our last meeting 30 climate witnesses already, I should indicate who some of those witnesses were. They were CEOs of coal burning utilities and coal mining companies. They testified they don't like being regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency. That is not testimony about the underlying science, the gravity of the problem, how some of the experts think that the window is closing for actions that can do something substantive to avoid what the scientists are predicting for the future.

So I would hope that we can pass this amendment and that the chairman will see that we are looking for something more than what we have had in the last 2 years and what we are being promised in this

action plan.

The Chairman. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. Sarbanes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I support Mr. Waxman's amendment as well. And I want to go back and reiterate, some of you may think this is tiresome, but I think we have to make this point about whether the globe is going to warm by 2 degrees or warm by 4 degrees, because the difference between those 2 scenarios is potentially cataclysmic.

All of the world's top scientific institutions are telling us that we have this rapidly closing window to reduce carbon pollution before the catastrophic impacts of climate change cannot be avoided. And Mr. Waxman's amendment is simply saying the committee should hear from the experts. He said this now again and again and it is a well-founded position.

The World Bank report is something that we need to consider. The World Bank answered the question why should we address climate change, and they addressed it head on. The report describes what the world will look like if we continue along our current path and allow the world to warm by 4 degrees Celsius. According to the report, a world that warms by that amount would suffer from -- are you ready -- unprecedented heat waves, flooding of coastal cities -- I mean, we have all seen movies like this, right -- increased risks of food and water scarcity, severe droughts, and irreversible damage to

ecosystems.

And on that point let me just say, I come from Maryland, Maryland is among the states most vulnerable to climate change. We have the fourth-longest tidal coastline behind only Florida, California, and Louisiana. And we are the third state most vulnerable to sea level rise, which is one of the major consequences of climate change. So this hits very close to home if you care about the Chesapeake Bay and you care about the communities and the economies that depend on that tidal shoreline.

Coral reefs would dissolve -- I am going on now with the statement from the World Bank report -- coral reefs would dissolve due to ocean acidification unmatched in the Earth's history, and extreme heat waves like the 2010 heat wave in Russia which killed 55,000 people would likely become the new normal summer.

So this effort to try to change the trajectory we are on and avoid this 4-degree increase, 4 degrees of Celsius increase is a critical one and we have available to us reports and research that can really make that point, I think, in a compelling way, if we can have that kind of testimony presented here to the committee. The International Energy Agency has looked at this issue of warming of the planet, concluded that if the world does not take action to reduce carbon pollution by 2017 the energy infrastructure existing at that time will make it impossible to limit warming to 2 degrees Celsius. In other words, we have just 4 years to take serious actions to reduce carbon pollution or we will be locked into a path towards devastating climate

change.

I grant you this sounds extremely alarmist, but it is because it is alarming. We are on a path where if we don't take action soon, and we have got the research that would support taking that action, it will be irreversible.

PricewaterhouseCoopers, another report that Congressman Waxman would like to have provided to the committee and about which we could get testimony, reached the same conclusion. They looked at how rapidly the world economy needs to, quote, "decarbonize," that is the word that is being used, meaning to reduce the amount of carbon we produce per unit of GDP. It found that the world economy must now decarbonize at an unprecedented rate of 5.1 percent per year to maintain a 50/50 chance of limiting warming to 2 degrees Celsius, and that rate of transformation is going to be difficult to reach.

So we need to hear this testimony, we ought to hear the testimony from the World Bank, the International Energy Agency, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and other experts about this window that is closing with respect to the effective action that we can take to address climate change.

And, Mr. Chairman, I think the anxiety that we have is -- and again, as I said last week, I don't quite know how locked in one is to the language in this Oversight Plan, but I could envision a situation where you might come back later and say, well, we are doing the things that are listed here and they don't include or allow for the kind of testimony that you are seeking, and that is why we would like to have

this language put into the report. I think this is a vote to educate ourselves, and I urge the committee to support Mr. Waxman's amendment, and I yield back my time.

The Chairman. The gentleman's time has expired. Are there other members wishing to speak on the amendment? Seeing none, the question occurs on the amendment.

All those in favor will say aye.

Those opposed, say no.

Mr. Waxman. Roll call vote.

The Chairman. Roll call vote is requested. The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk. Mr. Hall?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Barton?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Whitfield?

Mr. Whitfield. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Whitfield votes no.

Mr. Shimkus?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Pitts?

Mr. Pitts. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Pitts votes no.

Mr. Walden?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Terry?

Mr. Terry. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Terry votes no.

Mr. Rogers?

Mr. Rogers. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Rogers votes no.

Mr. Murphy?

Mr. Murphy. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Murphy votes no.

Mr. Burgess?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?

Mrs. Blackburn. No.

The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn votes no.

Mr. Gingrey?

Dr. Gingrey. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Gingrey votes no.

Mr. Scalise?

Mr. Scalise. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Scalise votes no.

Mr. Latta?

Mr. Latta. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Latta votes no.

Mrs. McMorris Rodgers?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Harper?

Mr. Harper. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Harper votes no.

Mr. Lance?

Mr. Lance. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Lance votes no.

Mr. Cassidy?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Guthrie?

Mr. Guthrie. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Guthrie votes no.

Mr. Olson?

Mr. Olson. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Olson votes no.

Mr. McKinley?

Mr. McKinley. No.

The Clerk. Mr. McKinley votes no.

Mr. Gardner?

Mr. Gardner. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Gardener votes no.

Mr. Pompeo?

Mr. Pompeo. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Pompeo votes no.

Mr. Kinzinger?

Mr. Kinzinger. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Kinzinger votes no.

Mr. Griffith?

Mr. Griffith. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Griffith votes no.

Mr. Bilirakis?

Mr. Bilirakis. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Bilirakis votes no.

Mr. Johnson?

Mr. Johnson. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Johnson votes no.

Mr. Long?

Mr. Long. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Long votes no.

Mrs. Ellmers?

Mrs. Ellmers. No.

The Clerk. Mrs. Ellmers votes no.

Mr. Waxman?

Mr. Waxman. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Waxman votes aye.

Mr. Dingell?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Markey?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Pallone?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Rush?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Ms. Eshoo?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Engel?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Green?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Ms. DeGette?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mrs. Capps?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Doyle?

Mr. Doyle. Yes.

The Clerk. Mr. Doyle votes aye.

Ms. Schakowsky?

Ms. Schakowsky. Yes.

The Clerk. Ms. Schakowsky votes aye.

Mr. Matheson?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Butterfield?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Barrow?

Mr. Barrow. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Barrow votes aye.

Ms. Matsui?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mrs. Christensen?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Ms. Castor?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Sarbanes?

Mr. Sarbanes. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sarbanes votes aye.

Mr. McNerney?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Braley?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Welch?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Lujan?

Mr. Lujan. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Lujan votes aye.

Mr. Tonko?

Mr. Tonko. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Tonko votes aye.

Chairman Upton?

The Chairman. Votes no.

The Clerk. Chairman Upton votes no.

The Chairman. Other members wishing to cast a vote? Mr. Hall?

Mr. Hall. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Hall votes no.

The Chairman. Mr. Barton?

Mr. Barton. No.

The Chairman. Mr. Barton votes no.

The Chairman. Dr. Burgess?

Dr. Burgess. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Burgess votes no.

The Chairman. Mr. Shimkus?

Mr. Shimkus. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Shimkus votes no.

The Chairman. Dr. Cassidy?

Dr. Cassidy. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy votes no.

The Chairman. Mr. Pallone?

Mr. Pallone. Yes.

The Clerk. Mr. Pallone votes aye.

The Chairman. Mr. Matheson?

Mr. Matheson. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Matheson votes aye.

The Chairman. Other members wishing to cast a vote? Seeing none, the clerk will report the tally.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, on that vote there were 9 ayes, 28 noes.

The Chairman. Nine ayes, 28 noes, the amendment is not agreed to.

Are there further amendments? The gentlelady from Illinois.

Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Chairman. The clerk will read the title.

The Clerk. Amendment to Draft Oversight Plan Offered by Ms. Schakowsky of Illinois.

[The amendment of Ms. Schakowsky follows:]

******** INSERT 1-3 ********

The Chairman. And the amendment will be considered as read by unanimous consent, and the gentlelady is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her amendment.

Ms. Schakowsky. First, I do want to read the amendment. "The committee will hold hearings to examine each of the multiple lines of evidence that convince the overwhelming majority of scientists and scientific organizations that climate change is occurring, is caused by human activities and poses substantial risks to the Nation's public health, environment, economy and prosperity. Invited witnesses will include the National Academy of Sciences."

So, my colleagues, I don't know how this has become such a seemingly partisan political issue. It is about stewardship and not about politics. And so what my amendment would do would simply allow the committee to hear the multiple lines of evidence that have convinced the world's preeminent scientific institutions that human-caused climate change is already occurring. These multiple lines of evidence include direct measurements, historical data, 19th century physics and 21st century computing.

We have known for over 100 years how greenhouse gases work in the atmosphere to trap heat. It is basic physics. We also know that atmospheric concentrations of heat-trapping gases have been rising rapidly for decades, based on decades of direct measurements, and we directly track and measure the human activities that release heat-trapping gases, such as burning fossil fuels. So if any member is uncertain about any of these facts let's hear from the scientists

who take these measurements and question them, if you wish.

We have extensive land- and ocean-based temperature and sea level records, as well as satellite measurements. These records continue to show increasing air and ocean temperatures and rising sea levels, particularly along the Atlantic coast. We have direct sampling records showing rising ocean acidity. We have a myriad of direct observations showing the effects of climate change in the natural world -- earlier flowering plants, which I am sure some gardeners over there have recognized; changes in migration patterns; changes in the ranges of plant and animal species. Let's just hear from the scientists about the evidence of climate change based on these direct measurements.

We also have historical data, such as the data from the sampling ice sheets, including Antarctica and Greenland. Scientists have drilled ice cores that provide a timeline of past atmospheric records dating back 800,000 years. And they are now are working to extend that timeline even further to cover the past 1.4 million years. So why don't we hear from the geologists who conduct these assessments and learn why they believe that today's climate changes are unprecedented over those 800,000 years of geologic history.

To understand what will happen as humans continue to emit huge quantities of greenhouse gases, scientists use sophisticated computer models of how the atmosphere and oceans work and how they respond to different atmospheric concentrations of heat-trapping gases, for projections of future emissions and their impacts. Scientists have

made numerous advances by collaborating across academic fields, including climatology and chemistry, biology, economics, energy dynamics, agriculture, scenario building, risk management and others. So let's hear from the teams of experts who have pooled their knowledge to help us understand what the future holds under different paths.

These multiple lines of evidence give the scientific community high confidence that climate change has been driven primarily by human activity, particularly over the past 50 years. Some members of this committee don't share that confidence, I get it. So this amendment gives this committee the opportunity to examine the multiple lines of evidence showing that climate change is caused by human activity, is already occurring, and will get far worse without action. You can question the scientists and try and convince yourself one way or another.

Now, I understand that some members don't believe the science is sufficiently strong to warrant any action to reduce carbon pollution. But why don't we hear from the people who have dedicated their lives to better understanding the physical world we live in? Why don't we hear from the scientists who have measured carbon dioxide levels and ice core samples, the scientists who have analyzed temperature records, who study how higher temperatures have caused drought or who measure the effects of higher acidity on sea life. I think we might just learn something from these scientists, but only if we are willing to listen to them. I urge my colleagues, I plead with my colleagues to support this amendment. And I yield back.

The Chairman. Gentlelady yields back. The chair would recognize the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Whitfield, for 5 minutes.

Mr. Whitfield. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And in response to the gentlelady's amendment, our friends on the other side of aisle have offered a number of amendments on climate change over the last 2 sessions that we have had on this, and I think all of us recognize that climate is changing, and many of us have sat through a multitude of hearings about it, we have all read a lot of literature on it. In fact, I would just say to you that the Congressional Budget Office reported in 2010 that in the United States we spent $7.5 billion on climate change, and then since then climate funding has continued at similar levels. Under the Recovery Act we appropriated another $35 billion in new climate change studies and spending. For international assistance alone, the State Department reported that in the last 3 years the U.S. provided $7.5 billion in assistance to developing countries.

So we are spending billions and billions of dollars of taxpayer dollars on looking at this issue. There is nothing certainly in our oversight report that we are going to hopefully approve today that would preclude additional hearings on climate change.

But the point that I would make out is this: Carbon emissions in the United States are the lowest level they have been in 20 years. They continue to decline in America. In August 2012, the U.S. Information Administration reported that U.S. CO2 emissions resulting from energy use were at the lowest in 2 decades. In its 2013 Annual

Energy Outlook the Energy Information Agency projected that U.S. energy-related carbon dioxide levels will remain more than 5 percent below their 2005 levels through 2040. So we have been successful in the U.S. of reducing our carbon emissions. In fact, America's probably doing better than any other country in the world. Even in Europe where they adopted a cap-and-trade system, their emissions have actually gone up.

But in developing countries CO2 emissions continue to rise. And according to the Energy Information Administration, non-OECD countries, in those countries CO2 emissions are expected to grow 73 percent above the 2008 level by the year 2035.

So this Congress, and not this 2013 Congress, but Congresses of the past, we haven't developed anything yet, but in America we have been successful. We have reduced CO2 emissions. We have been using hypercritical coal plants, we have been making all sorts of technological innovations. We are doing our part, but we can say that we are going to adopt a cap-and-trade system in America and do this and do that, and at what point do we meet a diminishing return? The objective now and the problem that we face is what are other countries doing? What is China going to do, what is India going to do, what is Bangladesh going do? What are all those countries going to do that are using diesel fuel to heat their homes?

So instead of doing overkill here in the U.S. where we are significantly reducing CO2 emissions, let's think up some things and let's work with some of these other countries. You know, America, we

did not sign the Kyoto Agreement, and yet our emissions are very close to meeting that now because of steps that we made voluntarily in this country. So I think we are doing a great job in America in meeting this requirement. We are cleaning up our emissions, we are doing a better job than almost any other country in the world. And let's adopt some steps to look at other countries to see what they can do about it. So I would yield back the balance of my time.

The Chairman. The gentleman yields back. Other members wishing to speak? Mr. Lujan from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. Lujan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I support my colleague's amendment. And last week during a hearing in the Energy and Power Subcommittee Chairman Whitfield expressed, and again today, his satisfaction that the U.S. carbon dioxide emissions have fallen to a 20-year low. Just to repeat, he said that, quote, "shows that the marketplace can continue to play a vital role," end quote. And Chairman Whitfield is right that the availability of cheap and affordable natural gas has helped to displace coal-fired power plants across the country. That is a key reason why carbon dioxide emissions have fallen, because we are generating more electricity from natural gas and less electricity from aging coal-fired power plants. We also are using more renewable energy that have made our cars and trucks more efficient so they emit less carbon pollution.

It is certainly good news that carbon emissions in the United States fell by 2 percent last year, but we must cut carbon pollution by far more to avoid a catastrophic degree of climate change, and

long-term projections don't look good. Absent action, carbon pollution will not fall sharply as needed. It fact it is projected to grow. The Energy Information Administration projects that under current policy carbon dioxide emissions will increase in 2013 and 2014 and continue to climb back over the coming decades. As a matter of fact, the International Energy Agency has issued a dire warnings. IEA found that existing infrastructure, such as power plants, factories and building, has already committed to a huge amount of carbon pollution. If the world does not take significant action and change course by 2017 we will be locked into carbon emissions level that guarantee warming of more than 2 degrees Celsius. And we just have to remember the debate that we had over the last amendment.

And we can't just focus on carbon pollution the United States emitted last year, we need to consider how much pollution we have been releasing over time. Carbon pollution lingers in our atmosphere for centuries and atmospheric levels of long-lived greenhouse gases jumped to record highs in 2011. EPA observed that the atmospheric levels of greenhouse gasses are, quote, "higher than any levels recorded for hundreds of thousands of years, even after accounting for natural fluctuations."

The United States needs to be a leader in finding a global solution rather than rest on its laurels because of a short-term dip in carbon emissions resulting from a one-time switch from coal to natural gas. The recent decline in emissions is certainly positive, but we have a lot of work left to do. Scientists are telling us that if we want to

avoid the worst impacts of climate change we need to act to cut our pollution dramatically in the years to come. And there is no reason to think that the market will achieve this. I support any colleagues's amendment to take an important first step by holding hearings in this committee on climate change science.

With that Mr. Chairman I yield back the balance of my time.

The Chairman. Gentleman yields back. Are there other members wishing to speak on the amendment? The gentleman from New York, Mr. Tonko.

Mr. Tonko. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I, too, support our colleague's amendment. Climate scientists agree that warming temperatures have contributed greatly to more frequent and intense extreme weather events, a trend that promises to worsen as temperatures continue to rise.

We don't have to look at the latest journal article for evidence of climate change anymore. That is what is so scary, all we have to do is walk outside or pick up the newspaper. Yesterday temperatures at Baltimore Washington International Airport logged in at 10 degrees above normal. In Charleston, West Virginia, it was 17 degrees warmer than normal. It was 14 degrees above normal in Columbus, Ohio. At the same time, the Northeast is digging out of an historic snowstorm that occurred this weekend. Winter Storm Nemo dumped 25 inches of snow in Boston, landing the storm in the city's top five snowfall events of all time. The storm dropped 34 inches of snow in New Haven, making it the worst snowstorm there since 1897. Nemo also broke decade's old

snowfall records in Portland, Maine.

In my own district we only need to look back a few months ago when Irene and Lee impacted the district severely. Some were quoting it to be a 500-year storm.

This committee has an obligation to the American people to listen to the scientists about the evidence linking our warming climate with the extreme weather events and to act to prevent this problem from getting worse. We all know that extreme weather events have significant costs. People lose their lives, people lose their homes, storm damage or destroyed businesses, and critical infrastructure. Farmers absorb huge losses, including that of valuable soils and land, exacting additional economic costs on top of the human toll. We need to hear about and understand the latest science. That is why I support my colleague's amendment. Once we have the facts we can engage in a real discussion as to how to make our communities more resilient in the face of extreme weather events that will be more common in the years to come. So I believe there is much work to be done. The hearings on such a matter would help significantly. With that, I yield back.

Ms. Schakowsky. Would the gentleman yield? Or did he yield back already?

Mr. Tonko. I yielded.

The Chairman. The gentleman still has the time if he wants to yield, Mr. Tonko.

Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you. Let me just say this to my friend Mr. Whitfield if I could. I don't disagree with any of the numbers

that you said, but we on this committee have a special opportunity, Mr. Tonko called it an obligation, I am saying an opportunity to do even more and to be a world leader. We are still very high in the emissions that we do. But to say that the United States is doing great, it is like on an airplane when they finally stopped allowing smoking on airplanes it is because it was the realization that there is one atmosphere on an airplane and we all ended up breathing in the smoke. But there is one atmosphere that we all share.

And so this idea of we are doing more than our part and time for other nations, I don't disagree with that either and I hope that we can encourage that, but we can take a real leadership role and make sure that we are good stewards of this planet right now, not just for ourselves but for our children and grandchildren. Clearly there are other things that we can do. And the nature of these amendments that we have been offering is just let's listen to the people who have dedicated their lives to this that can offer some suggestions, can give us the details. This is not a gotcha, this is not trying to suggest that the United States isn't trying or that this committee isn't doing its work. It is maybe that we could do a little bit better, that is all. I yield back.

Mr. Waxman. Will the gentleman from New York yield please.

Mr. Tonko. I yield.

Mr. Waxman. I think the question to Chairman Whitfield, who told us all the good news is, is this enough? Are we doing a good enough job. He says other countries aren't doing as good a job. What they

don't do will hurt us as well. Listening to the science and accepting reality is our responsibility as policymakers, and the National Academy of Sciences completed a multi-year review of the best available science related to climate change and we have heard about its findings, climate change is occurring, primarily caused by human activities, it poses a significant risk to society.

One of our colleagues on this committee is the chairman on the Intelligence Committee. I presume that he would listen to the intelligence people who are talking about the impact internationally if we don't do things. In fact, the National Intelligence Council said the greatest disruptive impacts on our society, including increased risks of impaired crop yields, water scarcity and coastal flooding. The intelligence community's findings regarding these potentially disruptive impacts is something we ought to hear about. So I support the Schakowsky amendment.

The Chairman. The gentleman's time has expired. Other members wishing to speak on the amendment? Seeing none, the question occurs on the amendment offered by the gentlelady from Illinois.

All those in favor will say aye.

Those opposed will say no.

Mr. Waxman. Roll call vote.

The Chairman. Roll call vote is requested. The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk. Mr. Hall?

Mr. Hall. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Hall votes no.

Mr. Barton?

Mr. Barton. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Barton votes no.

Mr. Whitfield?

Mr. Whitfield. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Whitfield votes no.

Mr. Shimkus?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Pitts?

Mr. Pitts. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Pitts votes no.

Mr. Walden?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Terry?

Mr. Terry. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Terry votes no.

Mr. Rogers?

Mr. Rogers. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Rogers votes no.

Mr. Murphy?

Mr. Murphy. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Murphy votes no.

Mr. Burgess?

Dr. Burgess. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Burgess votes no.

Mrs. Blackburn?

Mrs. Blackburn. No.

The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn votes no.

Mr. Gingrey?

Dr. Gingrey. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Gingrey votes no.

Mr. Scalise?

Mr. Scalise. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Scalise votes no.

Mr. Latta?

Mr. Latta. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Latta votes no.

Mrs. McMorris Rodgers?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Harper?

Mr. Harper. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Harper votes no.

Mr. Lance?

Mr. Lance. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Lance votes no.

Mr. Cassidy?

Dr. Cassidy. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy votes no.

Mr. Guthrie?

Mr. Guthrie. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Guthrie votes no.

Mr. Olson?

Mr. Olson. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Olson votes no.

Mr. McKinley?

Mr. McKinley. No.

The Clerk. Mr. McKinley votes no.

Mr. Gardner?

Mr. Gardner. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Gardner votes no.

Mr. Pompeo?

Mr. Pompeo. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Pompeo votes no.

Mr. Kinzinger?

Mr. Kinzinger. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Kinzinger votes no.

Mr. Griffith?

Mr. Griffith. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Griffith votes no.

Mr. Bilirakis?

Mr. Bilirakis. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Bilirakis votes no.

Mr. Johnson?

Mr. Johnson. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Johnson votes no.

Mr. Long?

Mr. Long. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Long votes no.

Mrs. Ellmers?

Mrs. Ellmers. No.

The Clerk. Mrs. Ellmers votes no.

Mr. Waxman?

Mr. Waxman. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Waxman votes aye.

Mr. Dingell?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Markey?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Pallone?

Mr. Pallone. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Pallone votes aye.

Mr. Rush?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Ms. Eshoo?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Engel?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Green?

Mr. Green. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Green votes aye.

Ms. DeGette?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mrs. Capps?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Doyle?

Mr. Doyle. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Doyle votes aye.

Ms. Schakowsky?

Ms. Schakowsky. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Schakowsky votes aye.

Mr. Matheson?

Mr. Matheson. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Matheson votes aye.

Mr. Butterfield?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Barrow?

Mr. Barrow. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Barrow votes aye.

Ms. Matsui?

Ms. Matsui. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Matsui aye.

Mrs. Christensen?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Ms. Castor?

Ms. Castor. Aye.

The Clerk. Ms. Castor votes aye.

Mr. Sarbanes?

Mr. Sarbanes. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sarbanes votes aye.

Mr. McNerney?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Braley?

[No response.]

The Clerk. Mr. Welch?

Mr. Welch. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Welch votes aye.

Mr. Lujan?

Mr. Lujan. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Lujan votes aye.

Mr. Tonko?

Mr. Tonko. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Tonko votes aye.

Chairman Upton?

The Chairman. Votes no.

The Clerk. Chairman Upton votes no.

The Chairman. Other members wishing to cast a vote? Mr. Shimkus?

Mr. Shimkus. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Shimkus votes no.

The Chairman. Anybody else? Seeing none, the clerk will report the tally.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, on that vote there were 13 ayes, 28 noes.

The Chairman. Thirteen ayes, 28 noes, the amendment is not agreed to.

Are there further amendments to the bill? Seeing none, the question now occurs on adopting the Oversight Plan for the 113th Congress and that the committee will take appropriate action to transmit the Oversight Plan to the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

All those in favor will say aye.

All those opposed, say no.

The ayes appear to have it, the ayes have it, and the Oversight Plan is approved.

The committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:57 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]